The Space Coast PC Journal

QR Codes: What They Are and How to Use Them

By Dorothy Fitch, Editor, GVR Computer Club, AZ

February 2021 issue, Green Bytes

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QR codes are popping up more and more frequently these days, and I began to wonder what they were all about. So, I did some investigating and tried creating and using them. It was a lot easier than I had expected and rather entertaining.

What is a QR code? Like barcodes on items at supermarkets, a QR code (short for Quick Response) is a two-dimensional way to store a lot of information. Known as a matrix barcode, the QR code was first designed in 1994 in Japan by Denso Wave, a subsidiary of Toyota Motor Corporation. Its goal was to "increase the efficiency in product tracking, item identification, time tracking, document man-

agement, and general marketing.... Because a QR code carries information in both vertical and horizontal directions, it can store several hundred times the amount of data carried by a bar code. In fact, over 7,000 numeric characters can be encoded in one QR code." Read more.

The QC code's design was inspired by Go, an ancient Japanese strategy game that uses black and white stones in a grid. Masahiro Hawa, the person assigned to develop a solution for Denso Wave, had his "aha" breakthrough while playing Go during a lunch break. This led to the invention of the QR code.

A QR code can link to a website, share contact information, send a text message, make a phone call, open a restaurant menu, allow you to check in for an appointment, play a video, and much more.

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Visit Our web Site at www.scpcug.com
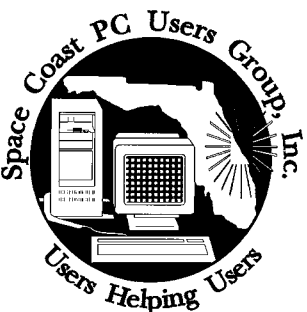
From The Editor

JOURNAL STAFF

All work on the Journal is performed by unpaid volunteers.

Submitting Articles to the Journal

We encourage all of our members to submit original computer-related articles for publication in
   The Space Coast PC Journal.

Writing a Product Review

It is really not that difficult to write a good review for *The Space Coast PC Journal*. These guidelines will help you get started:

Product information
- List the product name, release level, and manufacturer.

Use
- What does this product do?
- How easy is it to learn and use? Is it for beginners or does it have advanced features?
- List and describe some of the features. If this is an upgrade, what is new to this version?
- What did you like or dislike about it?
- Did you have to call Customer Support? What for? Were they helpful?

Installation
- How much disk space did the product take?
- How long did it take to install?
- Was it difficult to install?
- Specify requirements such as: DOS level, Windows level, Windows type, etc.

Recommendations
- Would you recommend this product?

Remember these are guidelines. They are not meant to be all-inclusive, nor should they limit your creativity. But all of them should be included as part of your article. Then the review will practically write itself!

Preparing Your Articles

To assist us in incorporating articles into the *Journal*, it would be helpful if certain minimum standards were followed. Use this quick-step guide:

Format: The preferred format is ASCII text files.We can also work with other formats, but check with the editor before using them.

Text: Single-space the text—even between paragraphs. Don't indent paragraphs. Use hard returns only at the ends of paragraphs.
   Use only one space after periods, colons, and question marks. Follow standard capitalization rules.
   Use left justification only. Do not right justify or block your text. (Word processors add extra spaces between words to justify the text and each of those extra spaces must then be removed.

Graphics: The preferred format for graphics accompanying your text is TIFF—in separate files from the text. Embedded graphics are   not useable. Most image editing programs have a "resize" option to alter the size of graphics. Please try to keep your graphic file sizes to around 1 meg in size. Call the editor if you have questions.

Be sure to include your name and phone number so we may contact you if we have any questions. Anonymous articles will not be published.

Submit your article by uploading the file to ringram728@earthlink.net or bring your disk and hardcopy to the Monday meeting or mail to:
   Editor, SCPCUG Journal
   Space Coast PC Users Group, Inc.

   1360 Mayflower Avenue

   Melbourne, Fl 32940-672

   3Articles must be received by the 28th of the month to appear in the next issue, and all are, of course, subject to editing.   □

The COVID-19 pandemic has had quite a large impact on everyone, including us. Initially masks were required everywhere. In our case speccifically it was the Library,

Additionally,the personal spacing requirement posed a problem for us in the Conference room. The limited space made attendence at the Learning Center session a problem.. There is no relief in sight for the near future.

The auditorium is having a total refurbishment. This will include the floor, the walls, and some of the other features. There is no current prediction as to when this will be completed. It will definitely not be in May.

We have gotten one break. The Library no longer requires wearing masks to enter the facility. This seems to be a general rule at most public facilities throughout the area.

I hope you have taken advantage of the availability of the vaccine at the large number of locations offering it. Once done, you can be reasonably confident that you will not contract the virus if exposed. Take care.

""""""""""**Ron Ingraham, Editor**

Those who have listed an e-mail address would prefer to be contacted by e-mail rather than by phone whenever possible.

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If there is a progam not listed that you feel comfortable with, let us list you as one of our helplines contact ringram28@cfl.rr.com

The SCPCUG Home Page is at:
http://www.scpcug.com
Check it out!!!!!

IN THIS ISSUE

Feature Articles

Regular Articles

Notices

Presentation
In Conference Room
2 PM

Bring Some Friends

QR Codes...........................from page 1

I created QR codes to link to specific websites that would be difficult to enter on a phone. By scanning the QR codes, you can immediately open up the web page. Try them out!

Go board with black and white stones that are placed on a grid.
(image from commons.wikimedia.org, a great source for free photos)

How to scan a QR code:
On an iPhone, use the built-in camera, which can automatically read QR codes. Read 'Scan a QR Code with your iPhone, iPad, iPod touch' at Apple Support.

On an Android phone, there are several ways to scan a QR code, depending on your specific model. There are many free apps available in the Google Play store that can scan QR codes, but you may not need one. The camera in newer versions of Android (10 and up) can scan them automatically. Try this to check: point the camera at a QR code and hold for a few seconds. If the camera doesn't scan it, long-press the Home button, then press the Google Lens icon (shown below), just to the left of the microphone icon at the bottom of the screen. Tap the shutter button to search for its meaning. You should see the URL for the website and link directly to it. I also found I could easily use a free QR code scanner without installing the app. Swipe down from the top of the phone and click the Search (question mark) icon to get to the Finder Search. Type QR, then locate and click the QR Scanner icon. Once it scans the code, press

OPEN to follow the link. Read more about how to scan QR codes on an Android phone.

Google Lens icon, referenced above

How to create a QR code:
I created the QR codes using this free website: goqr.me. All I had to do was type in the web address I wanted the code to take me to; it automatically generated the QR code, which I could then download. Try scanning these QR codes and see where they take you.

What's special about February 8?   Read a good classic book!

In addition to using QR codes to link to websites, you can also create ones that store text: not

From the Cashier's Cage

Financial Report for Month Ending April, 2021

CHECKING

Beginning Balance   578.62

No Activity

    Ending balancee - includes $13.41 snack fund balance.   578.62

SAVINGS

Beginning Balance   305..27

   Interest   .01

Ending Balance   305.28

Total Accounts Balance   **883.90**

SMS text messages, but plain text, as in a birthday message or poem.

Club Meeting Minutes
April 15, 2021

President Dan Douglas called the meeting to order at 2:10 PM. Board Members present via zoom were President Dan Douglas, Webmaster Curt Potsic and Secretary Barb Mead. Absent were Treasurer Irene Nelson, Journal/Learning Center Ron Ingraham, Vice President Larry Bennet: Membership Chairperson Linda Glassburn joined the meeting later.

Attendance was 4 officers and 5 members for a total of 9 attendees.

Dan told the group about Novatek, a Titusville based computer business that is closing its doors and had sent out a copy of its going out of business information.

Curt went over his webmaster report. He discussed the upcoming leaving of the company LG from the smart phone business. LG will continue to service the phones for a period of time but the company is focusing on electric vehicle components, smart homes and other products.

Ron noted that he had not put any links in the previous issue of the journal and had not heard any comments from any members about the lack of links and wondered if we found them valuable. The members stated that they had used them in the past but were concerned about the time they might take to put into the newsletter versus the actual use.

Dan has written about scammers for his editorial this month. He has gotten a lot of requests for help from people scammed recently and has included hints and tips in his column this month.

Member Alan Zoeller commented that AARP magazine recently did an article on scammers.

The group voted to have a Zoom meeting for the upcoming Saturday to test if there was interest in Zoom meetings or if the group would wait to meet until the work was completed on the Merritt Island Library meeting rooms in mid May.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:56 PM.

Dan's Desk

This month I'm updating the presentation highlights from the session that I gave at at the APCUG virtual Technology Conference held back in 2019. I spoke on the topic "Most Common Issues that Need Repair from a PC/Mac Repair Shop Perspective". Here's some of the highlights:

Failing or Failed Hard Disc Drives/HDD

Symptoms

Poor performance
Boot failure message
Hard drive failure prediction message issued by Self-Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Technology (SMART)

Solution

Replace HDD with HDD (I no longer recommend doing this; you'll be much better off with a SSD in almost every case)
Replace HDD with Solid State Disc (SSD)
If old HDD is still bootable, clone to new drive
If old HDD is not bootable, but still readable, copy personal files off for later transfer to new drive

Web Scammer Messages

Symptoms

Locked out from PC with message panel displayed with number to call
Phone call claiming to be Microsoft, Dell, etc.
Web page that states you are infected and must call

Solution

System restore to last system checkpoint
Clean/reset browser start pages and/or search engine

Install Malwarebytes and perform scan to remove any nasty programs

Poor Performance

Symptoms

Slower boot times than normal
Mouse/keyboard slow to respond
Browsers/apps slow to load/respond
Solution

Check for hard drive errors and excessive usage in Task Manager – many hard drives with capacities of greater than 500GB are failing much sooner in my experience
Check for malware/spyware – run Malwarebytes
Check for obvious 'junk' programs in Programs & Features
Especially programs that claim to maintain drivers
Check for missing Windows updates
Check Event Viewer logs for error messages

Lockout/Loops After Updates

Symptoms

Spinning circle with black screen
Loop constantly restarting
Message with automatic repair failure/attempts

Solution

Try using System Restore in Advanced tools
Sometimes just letting it run 15-30 minutes fixes it

If these don't work, backup personal files and try reset of the OS
Sometimes, HDD must be wiped and reloaded if Windows cannot be booted after all recovery actions fail

If you have suggestions for other topics like this, that you would like to see explained, please let me know!
❑

Webmaster Wanderings

Due to Merritt Island Public Library Auditorium renovations there is no Main Monthly Meeting Apr 15 and no Saturday Learning Center Meetings Apr 17 and May 1 at the library. However the Apr 15
    Main Monthly Meeting is being held virtually via the Zoom App.

Jere's Tech Tips

Windows, Android, Linux tips from Jere Minich, APCUG Advisor, Region 5
(AL, FL, GA, SC).

New items include:

3 Ways to Get More Life Out of Your Android or iPhone Battery
How to Add a Gmail Account to Outlook Online
 6 Ways You Can Get a Microsoft Office License for Free
The Best Way to Clean Windows 10: A Step-by-Step Guide
How to connect an Android Phone to a Windows 10 PC
How to Make Microsoft Edge Read Articles to You
How to Read Kindle Books on Your Computer or a Website
10 Ways to Take a Screenshot on any Windows 10 Device.
https://apcug2.org/jerestips/

APCUG Reports

The 1st Quarter (Jan-Mar) Winter 2021 report is available at: https://apcug2.org/reports/
Modems, Routers, and Wi-Fi Wednesday Work-

shop - Held Feb 24, 2021. This 2-hour workshop discussed the latest developments in modems and router hardware, buying & using your own equipment, and best practices for setup & deployment.
Video at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r6h2QDt6oIU

Macs vs Windows PCs - Held Mar 10, 2021
Presentation of MAC vs PC comparison of features and pros and cons of each so you could consider leaving Microsoft Windows and go with an Apple product.
Video at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bDtGqDD0OLM

Learning Linux #6 -Settings & Files & Commands, Oh My - Held Mar 17, 2021
This Learning Linux workshop, covered a number of topics. No Video Yet.

Easily Stay In Touch With Your Members With Mailchimp - Held Mar 24, 2021.
Mailchimp is one of the most popular email marketing tools used for communicating with your group's target market – members & prospective members. No Video Yet.

How & Why To Back Up Your Hard Drive - Held on "World Back Up Day," Mar 31, 2021.
Don't lose your important data: documents, photos, music, or videos. We look at an overview of backing up your hard drive & your smartphone during this workshop. No Video Yet.

Cutting the Cord - Watching TV (Legally) Without Cable - Held Apr 14, 2021.
Have you wanted to cut the cord? Pay less money each month for the programs you want to watch? Don't know how to do? Afraid to take the leap? Rob Truman helps us discover our options when it comes to living without a cable bill each month. Learn how to use your Internet connection for all your viewing needs, including

Webmaster Wanderings................from page 7

cable, local, premium, music, & sports
channels.
1
Learning Linux Workshop #7 - To be held Apr 21,
2021
Registration at: https://forms.gle/CXMdjoGAEdt-
PzJoC9 closes 11:30 pm (PT) Apr 20.
The topic for this workshop presentation is "Cus-
tomizing the Linux Desktop." One of the great
features of Linux is how customizable the desktop
environment can be. We will have four Linux
users start with the default desktop look that
comes with different distros and show us how they
customize it to meet their likes, needs, and work-
flow.

Genealogy -To be held Apr 28, 2021
Registration at: https://forms.gle/LqPe3Rnu-
J3u8Mhnx8 closes at 11:30 pm (PT) Apr 27.
Have you wanted to know more about your rela-
tives but don't know how to start or what to use?
Sue, Orv, and Murray will talk about What is ge-
nealogical software? Why use it? and give us a
demonstration on Family Tree Maker, Gramps,
and RootsMagic.

1 New Link

Gizmodo - News & Opinion site about Gadgets,
Technology, Science, Environmental News,
Entertainment, & Culture. Also has Reviews on
Latest Phones, TVs, Laptops, Movies, etc.
https://gizmodo.com/

Gizmodo aims to cover the worlds of technology,
science, and entertainment with transparency,
accuracy, humor, and blunt honesty. Has things
such as Deals of the Day, Buyer's Guide,
COVID-19 Coverage, Field Guide (A guide to the
gadgets, and how to make them work for
you), etc.Gizmodo also has a free Newsletter
.

Misc Items

LG Leaving the Smartphone Business

LG is closing down its smartphone business. It

plans to focus on electric vehicle components,
connected devices, smart homes, robotics, artificial
intelligence, and business-to-business solutions.
LG will fully shut down its smartphone unit by
July 31st. It blames the competitive smartphone
industry for its failure. LG is the 3rd largest phone
brand in the U.S. but has had problems navigating
the global market. If you own an LG smartphone,
as I do, you may be wondering where this move
leaves you? A press release stated that LG will
continue to offer service and software support for
existing phones for a "period of time," which will
vary by region.
LG has said that premium phones will receive up
to three iterations of Android updates from the
year of purchase. This update guarantee includes
all premium LG phones released in 2019 or
later — G series, V series, Velvet, and Wing. The
more affordable 2020 models such as LG
Stylo and K series will receive two OS updates. I
have a Tracfone LG K31 Rebel so I shoud be
good for 2 years of Android updates.

Windows 10 Ver 20H2 Near 30% Usage

AdDuplex reports that Windows 10 ver 20H2 (Oct
2020 Update) now accounts for a 29.9% usage
share of all Windows 10 PCs in the world. This is
based on a survey of almost 80,000 Win10 PCs. It
was noted that ver 20H2 is not growing at the ex-
pense of ver 2004 (May 2020 Update), but rather
older releases. Ver 20H2 added almost 10% to its
usage share in March.
February accounted for only a 20% usage share.
Ver 20H2 is still the second-most-popular
Windows 10 version. Ver 2004 now accounts for
42.1% usage of all Windows 10 PCs and its
usage barely changed from a 41.8% usage share
for February.

Amazon Fire TV Adds 200 Free Live Channels
Amazon has added ad-supported Xumo, IMDb TV,
and Amazon News channels to Fire TV.
Plex's live TV service will also be added. The new
live TV offerings can be found on Fire TV's
"On Now" tab or in the Universal Channel Guide
on the Fire TV app. Xumo, IMDb TV, Amazon

News, and Plex join 16 other live TV providers on Fire TV, including Tubi, Pluto TV, Philo, YouTube TV, and Sling. The Fire TV platform also supports local news in some areas.
Amazon's live TV catalog now includes 400 channels, with 200 ad-supported free channels.
Amazon is also updating Alexa support for live TV voice commands. You can ask Alexa to "play Good Morning America" or other live shows on Fire TV. Plus it has a new "Peak" feature that shows you what a live TV channel is playing when you hover over it.

Microsoft Kills Cortana on Mobile

A Microsoft support document stated "As we announced in July, we will be ending support for the Cortana app on Android and iOS, as Cortana continues its evolution as a productivity assistant. After March 31, 2021, the Cortana mobile app on your phone will no longer be supported." As of Mar 31 content you created on Cortana will no longer function in the Cortana mobile app. However, you can still access it through Cortana in Windows. Cortana reminders, lists, and tasks are also synced to the Microsoft To Do app, which is still available on mobile. Microsoft is shifting Cortana "toward a transformational AI-powered assistant experience in Microsoft 365." ❏

Club Meeting Minutes ..from page 5

Additional note from the following Saturday April 17 2021 Zoom session.

There were only 3 people in attendance at the Saturday Zoom meeting so the next meeting will be in person Saturday May 15, 2021 if the construction on the library rooms is complete. ❏

Respectfully submitted by Barbara Mead, Secretary.

QR Codes ....from page 4

Can you read this fun limerick?

I've cheated a bit in this article. For those who prefer not to attempt to scan the QR codes, you can just click each image to access its content. Usually, QR codes are printed and you couldn't do that!

Here's a challenge for you, though: create a QR code and email it to a teenager. They will think you are so cool, knowing about QR codes! ❏

Thoughts from a Clicker

By Tiny Ruisch, Vice President, Cajun Clicker

February 2021 issue, CCCC Computer News

www.clickers.org
office (at) clickers.orrg

Last week at one of my Zoom meetings someone asked me iif I had ever used Irfanview, an image viewer, and editor. I replied that it was one of my Go-TO programs about ten years ago. This chance gets me thinking about some of my computer experiences over the years. technology has sure changed a lot. One of my first computer memories was when i was still in high school and INIVAC was in the news. No one had any idea what the thing was good for. The census used one to somehow make counting the population easier. It was a differrent world back then and nobody much cared about a machine that was bigger then the family car and needed a special air-conditioned room

One thinig that interested me was the Texas Instruments Pocket calculator. My daddy was a feed salesman and the company that he workwed for provided him with one of these expensive

Thoughts ....from page 9

machines I remember him getting it out to show us how he could add 2 and 2 without making a mistake.

When I joined the Navy, I had my first experience with using a computer. I got to run the keypunch machine. If I made a mistake, a ship could easily get 10,000 pounds of butter instead of 1,000. Back then, the Navy paid us in cash. In later years, our paychecks were an IBM computer punch card. Now, most employers don't even issue checks. It's all done electronically.

In the late 1970s, computers started to catch on. IBM was the company that created the home market. Their 8086/8088 weighed about 30 pounds and had a whole megabyte of random-access memory. It blazed along at a speedy 4.77 MHz. Other companies that built computers soon started advertising themselves as IBM compatible. If you worked for IBM, you were required to wear a tie.

This is also the era when many of us hobbyists started building our first computers. Zenith Heath Kits were all the rage. They didn't work any better, but we were smarter because we built our own.

The operating system of choice in those days was PC-DOS. There were many other ones, but the home market was mainly CP/M or one of the DOS systems from Apple, Atari, or Commodore. In the early 1980s, a fellow you may have heard of buying an operating system called 86-DOS which was also known as Q-DOS (for Quick and Dirty DOS). Bill Gates later renamed it to MS-DOS for the company that he founded.

I'm pretty sure that Microsoft is still in business today.

Home computing started to take off in the '80s when Radio Shack introduced the Trash 80 (oops. I meant TRS 80). Apple's home computer was the Lisa and Texas Instruments had something called the TI-99.

I remember the first computer I bought. It was a Commodore VIC20. I loved that computer with its 5 KB of RAM and the data cassette storage, even though it often took 3-4 minutes to load a program. Incidentally, the VIC20 was the first home computer that sold a million units. In later years the Commodore 64 was even better.

The first innovative computer program to be sold was the spreadsheet VisiCalc. Like so many other successful things, clones like Lotus 1-2-3, Super-Calc, and Microsoft Excel were soon on the market. Did you know that Microsoft's Excel was first introduced for the Apple Macintosh? It was only later that it was ported to Windows. WordStar was the first commercially profitable word processor.

The real software revolution was the games. I don't think you could walk 50 feet without seeing somebody playing Space Invaders, PAC Man, or one of the many variations of Pong. I'll confess that my favorite games were made by Infocom. They specialized in "interactive fiction" games. I still remember their advertising slogan, "We put our graphics where the sun don't shine." Graphics adapters later put this type of adventure game out of business. Their first game was Zork which debuted in 1980.

In the old days, the only decision to be made when you bought a monitor was whether to have green or amber output. The only sound you could hear was the tinny beep for the operating speaker. The only mouse in the computer room lived in the wall. Printers were all dot matrix and printed about 30 characters a minute.

Of course, one of the biggest changes in computing has been the internet and the use of e-mail. I've heard that e-mail was invented by a Nigerian that had a lot of extra money to spend. The browser choices were Mosaic or Netscape. We've come a long way from logging in to the Bulletin Board. ❑

Windows 10, S-Mode

What's that? Do I need it? Do I want it?

Apps and Applications – Mobile and Desktop

By Phil Sorrentino, Newsletter Contributor,
Sarasota Technology Users Group

December 2020 issue, STUG Monitor

www.thestug.org
philsorr (at) yahoo.com

Recently I needed a very inexpensive, low-end Windows 10 laptop. I intended to stream movies from one of my main computers, located across the house, to this new device and then show the movies on a big screen TV.

From a performance point of view, I may have been able to use a Chromebook, a Tablet, or even an old phone but I wanted the device to be able to be part of a Windows network. So I decided I needed a low-cost Windows 10 computer.

Keep in mind that nowadays, even low-cost laptops come with pretty decent performance, capabilities, and features. I've bought a few computers in the past and I've found that the important things to consider have always been, CPU, display, RAM, Hard drive (electronic drive in some), Networking (Wi-Fi), and Input/ Output ports. (I won't even need a mouse with this computer; the touchpad will do just fine.)

Most laptops, these days, have pretty nice screens, though the price seems to go up as the screen gets bigger. I wasn't going to use the screen for watching the movie so I decided to look for a small screen.

The CPUs were all from Intel or AMD, not top of the line but more than capable enough. Most had 4 GB of RAM. Hard drive capability varied but because I wasn't going to use the laptop to store much this wasn't a big concern. I did establish that I wanted a minimum of 64 GB if the laptop used SSD (Solid State Drive) memory rather than a hard drive. (In the past I had one with only 32 GB and I had trouble updating the Operating System when it was necessary.)

Wi-Fi was a necessity because of the location of the laptop with respect to the movie streaming computer. Also, I wanted at least two USB ports, one for extra memory, should the need arise, and one for a mouse, should the need arise. With that minimal description, I started my search.

There are plenty of name-brand laptops out there like HP, Dell, Microsoft, and Lenovo, but I wanted a very low-cost device, so I widened my search to other brands like LG, ASUS, Acer, and Toshiba. I even considered "refurbished" laptops but I never found one for the right price.

My search ended when I found an 11-inch ASUS Vivobook laptop model L203M at what I thought was an incredible price, $294 at Walmart. (Recently, I have seen it for about $10 less.) As I became familiar with the laptop features, I realized it had Windows 10 S-Mode. I knew there were a few different versions of Windows 10 like Home and Pro for home use and Enterprise for businesses, but I wasn't familiar with S-Mode.

You will probably only come across the S-Mode version of Windows 10 if you are looking at the low end of Windows laptops. (I found laptops from all of the name brands that had Windows 10 S-Mode installed, even Microsoft has one, but the ASUS was about the lowest when I was looking to make the purchase.)

In a nutshell, Windows 10 S-Mode is a version of Windows 10 that is streamlined for security (I guess, hence the S) and performance, while providing a familiar Windows experience. To increase security, it allows you to get and use Apps only from the Microsoft Store and requires you to use Microsoft Edge for browsing.

All other versions of Windows 10 have the option to install applications from third-party sites and stores like Google, Yahoo, and hundreds of others. Because many people prefer Chrome to Edge, this could become a pivotal issue, but if you can live with Edge as your browser this may be a good choice. Part of its improved security may be a side-effect of the inability to install Apps from other websites not approved by Microsoft since viruses tend to hide in dubious internet downloads.

Windows 10 S Mode............from page 11

One interesting feature of S-Mode is that you can convert from S-Mode to the standard Windows 10 Home (or Pro) version, but it is a one-way conversion. It's as easy as going to the Microsoft Store and Opting out of S-Mode. Once you convert you have to stay there, you cannot go back to S-Mode, though I've seen indications that this might change in the future. (Microsoft used to charge a fee for this conversion, but now it is free.)

Windows 10 S-mode has been around since 2017. It is a lightweight version of the Windows 10 Operating System. Published statistics indicate it has been installed over 825 million times, so there are a good number of users. It is more protected than other versions and streamlined so it can run fast even on budget CPU devices.

Even with its limitations, Windows 10 S-Mode still includes File Explorer, as we all know, the keys to the kingdom. It is aimed at the Education sector of the computer business where a certain amount of control, and possibly limitation, is needed.

This puts Windows 10 S-Mode in direct competition with Google's Chromebooks which have enjoyed unprecedented success and popularity in this education sector. The literature indicates you can find Windows 10 S-Mode laptops starting at about $200, but the lowest price I found in my search was just under $300. (Microsoft probably subsidizes the cost of the OS to hardware manufacturers, so you are probably only paying for the hardware.

So when all is said and done, is Windows 10 S-Mode right for you? Could be if you have

minimal needs, that could be met by even using a Chromebook. ❑

Fiction is obliged to stick to possibilities. Truth isn't.

Mark Twain

Windows 10 Tips and Tricks

By Dorothy Fitch, Editor, GVR Computer Club

October 2020 issue, Green Bytes

https://www.ccgvaz.org/
dmfitch (at) cox.net

Here are some tips and tricks for using Windows 10. Try them out!

1. How to pin items to the Taskbar or Start menu

It can be handy to have your most frequently used apps just a mouse-click away. You can place buttons to open or switch to them on the Taskbar that runs along the bottom of your screen, or in the Start menu, which is what you see when you click the Windows button at the left edge of the Taskbar.

To put a program in one of these places, click the Start button. Scroll down to find the program you want to add in the list. Right-click the name of the program and you will see these choices:
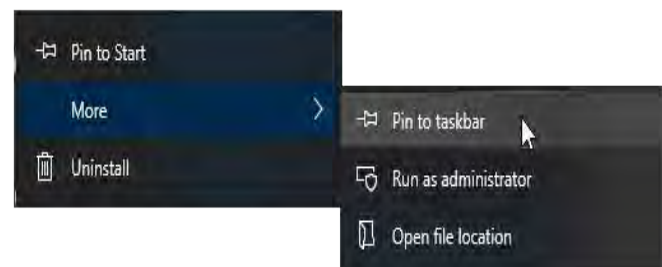
You can click Pin to Start on the left side to add it to the Start menu. Or you can click Pin to taskbar to place it at the bottom of your screen. Either way, you'll have an easy way to get to your programs.

There are probably already shortcut icons on your Desktop to start up your programs, but I find the Desktop gets too cluttered and I have hidden all the Desktop items. To do this, right-click anywhere on the Desktop. Choose View, at the top, and then uncheck Show desktop items.

2. How to add Search and Task View to the Taskbar

Here are a couple of handy tools you can add to your Taskbar.

A. You can add a Search button or even a Search box. Right-click the Taskbar and look for Search, near the top. Your choices are to hide Search, show the icon, or show the text box.

If you choose the icon, you can click it to get a search box. You can filter the search to include All, Apps, Documents, Web, Folders, and more. Select what you want to search by clicking on the desired area.

B. You might also want to add the Task View button. To do this, right-click the Taskbar and select the Show Task View button. When you click the Task View button, all of your open files and folders appear on your screen and you can click to switch to any of them.

The left side of your Taskbar might now look like this, with the Start button first, then the Search button, then the Task View button. With these options available, it's easier to get around Windows 10.

3. Windows 10 Major Update and what I had to correct

Your Windows 10 computer may have just been updated a new version. In mid-September, my new version was installed: v. 2004. That sounds like it's about seven years old, but Microsoft

names major updates after a year and a month, so it is only about five months old (2004 means April 2020). [To find your version number for Windows 10, go to Settings>System>About.]

I haven't read anything about this update, but I noticed a couple of differences right away. One was that every time a search for something in File Explorer came up empty, my entire screen flashed black, inverting most of the colors. It was very momentary, but rather disturbing. I finally figured out where to change that setting.

It's under Audio, of all things. I had thought that perhaps I was seeing this screen flash because most of the time I have my sound turned off. But even after unmuting my sound, it persisted. I was finally able to turn it off by going here: Settings>Ease of Access> Audio. (To get to Settings, click the Windows button, then the gear.)

Below is what part of that setting looks like (click to enlarge it). Note the choices at the bottom for Show audio alerts visually. I found mine set to Flash the entire screen! I know I never chose that setting and can only imagine that Microsoft changed it during the update process. Now, it's back to something better. Whew!
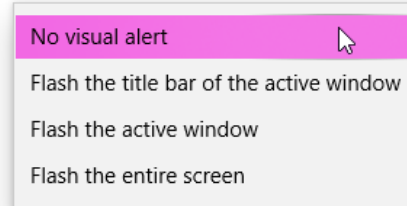
Audio

Make your device easier to hear or use without sound.

Change device volume

53 %

Show audio alerts visually

Select how visual alerts for notifications are displayed

No visual alert

Flash the title bar of the active window

Flash the active window

Flash the entire screen

4. How to customize colors and backgrounds

Here is another issue that occurred after that major Windows 10 update. My Taskbar was very light-colored and all the tabs in my browser were black! That was definitely not what I had before, and I didn't like it. I poked around and found the settings needed to put them back to what I wanted.

I found them in Settings>Personalization>Colors. I chose Dark for default Windows mode and Light for default app mode. I'm not sure about the terminology being used, but it didn't matter. I was able to click the radio buttons and see the colors change immediately, so I knew when I had made the right choices.

You can also choose to have a slideshow of images on your desktop. Go to Settings>Personalization> Background to choose a folder to select the images from, set the timing, and explore other options.

Click on these images to enlarge them.
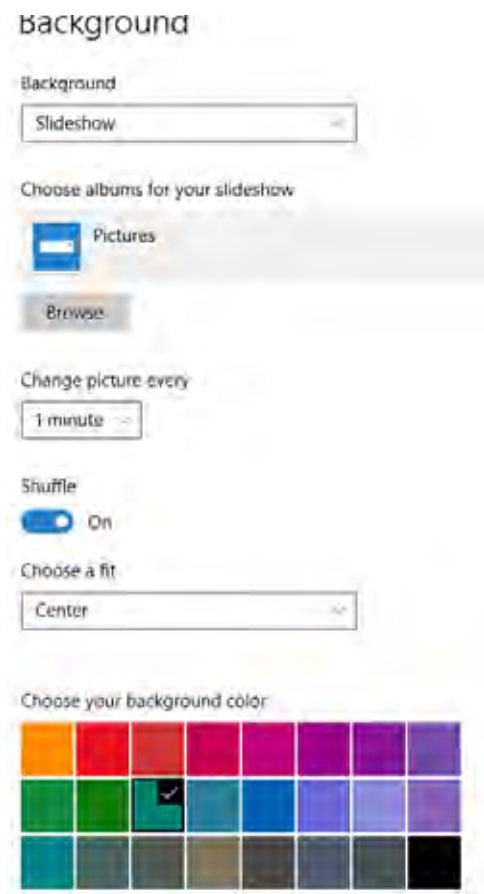
It's fun to change your colors and backgrounds once in a while to give your computer a fresh look.

Note: In Windows 10, you can select just a single folder for background photos. Choosing that folder doesn't automatically include images in its sub-folders. To enjoy a wider selection of photos, I created a new folder and copied a few thousand images into it to be chosen at random for background images.

5. How to restore those fun Windows 7 games

Remember those fun games that came with Windows 7—Mahjong Titans, FreeCell, Minesweeper, Hearts, Solitaire, to name a few? You can install these games on Windows 10 and they work just fine. However, Microsoft tends to delete them when it does a major update (it just did it with my 2004 update in September). Advice: keep the download file (or this email) so you can always get them back. You can choose which games you want to install.

To get the games, click here to go to the website, then click the link shown below. (Note that there are several other Download buttons on this page, but they are ads, so stay away from them.)
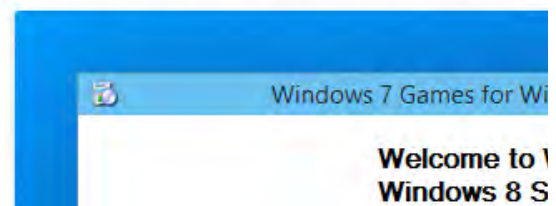
Then look for and click this link:

Download ‹Windows 7 games for Windows 10›
Size: 146.66 Mb

Download link: <u>Click here to download the file</u>
6. How to manage multiple documents with check-boxes

You can add checkboxes to items in folders in Windows 10. Click the View tab in any folder and look for the Item check boxes option in the Show/hide area (shown circled in red in the image below, which you can click to enlarge).

Checking this option puts a check box next to each item in the folder. This may make it easier than using the mouse to select several items at once. Then you can copy, delete, or open them in one easy action.
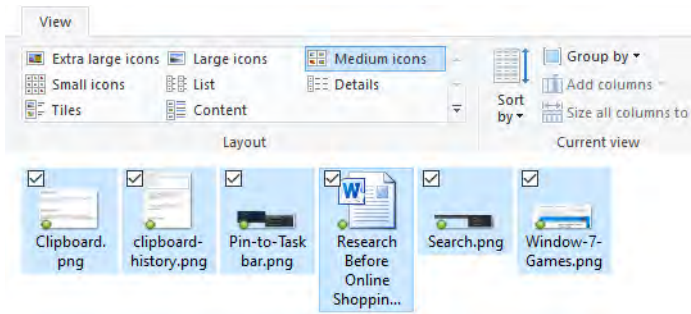
Clipboard

When you copy or cut something in Windows, it's copied to the clipboard for you to paste.

Clipboard history

Save multiple items to the clipboard to use later. Press the Windows logo key + V to view your clipboard history and paste from it.

On

7. How to use multiple clipboards

Did you know that Windows 10 supports multiple clipboards? After copying text or images, you can choose which one you want to paste from a list of recently copied items. First you have to turn on the feature. Go to Settings>System>Clipboard. Turn on the button for Clipboard history.

Now, when you want to paste an item from your Clipboard history, hold down the Windows key on your keyboard (it's between Ctrl and Alt) and press the V key. You will see a list of the things you can paste and click on the one you want.

Enjoy exploring some of these Windows 10 features! ❑

President's Corner
Taking Technology Too Personally

by Greg Skalka
President, Under the Computer Hood Users Group

Drive Light, May 2021

When I was growing up, there seemed to be more universal and unifying experiences in our lives related to technology. We had much less tech than today, but it served us well and was more common in its applications and experiences. While there were the 'have' and 'have not' divides initially, new devices were often adopted relatively quickly, and usually went to fairly high levels of usage across society. This provided a common basis of experience for most people.

Television often provided a common topic that many strangers could relate to things. You could talk to your friends about the shows you watched the night before as they likely watched some of same ones. Telephones were very basic but provided a capability that everyone had to have. The instruments were all very similar as Ma Bell controlled the technology and the market. The rotary dial of the phone and the channel knob on the TV provided simple, common user interfaces. Anyone versed in using a phone or TV set could

Taking Technology............from page 15

likely operate anyone's phone or TV. Operating a car was the same; with its standardized controls, any driver could operate most any car (even most of the accessories). Our homes had very standardized appliances and lighting systems, providing a common user experience .

Today we have much more technology, much more complex technology and more diverse technology. In addition to more capabilities, we have more choices, with more competition in the marketplace. As a result, there is much less standardization and much more personalization. Choice can be good, but with more choices, there is often less consensus. There are more ways to personalize your experiences, which means fewer other people use the same things, watch the same things or do the same things. This can result in fewer people caring about the same things as you do. While our technology supposedly enables greater communication, the countless choices, versions and variations we can have can sometimes act as an isolating factor in society.

It is great to have thousands of choices of what to watch on television, but when everyone watches something different, having a common cultural baseline is more difficult. Choices don't end with content; how you watch can be personal. Fewer people watch "broadcast" television (over the air); we often choose cable, satellite or streaming. Music is consumed in the same ways with the same multitude of choices. If you don't like what is playing, tell Alexa to skip to the next song. More and more, our entertainment is "on demand." At one time we more often watched shows or listened to music with others; now we are more likely to consume media individually. Instead of getting together to listen to that new album, we have our own personal play lists.

The introduction of the "personal" computer may not have started the trend, but it seemed to accelerate it. Families used to sit around the radio in the evenings for entertainment; later, the focal point was the living room television. The personal computer pushed everyone to their own devices. I remember having four computers in our house when our two children lived with us. Now there are only two of us here, but we do have more than four computers in the house.

Smart phones are the ultimate in "personal" devices. Almost everyone has one. They are not the same, however; they could be iPhone or Android, and any number of makes, models and screen sizes. Even the exact same phones can be loaded up with personalized apps, photos, media and cases. No one shares them, so everyone is alone with their own individualized device. I've seen this sad scene far too many times: a family out at a restaurant, and each member, while sitting together, is intently manipulating their own smart phones. And they don't appear to be communicating with each other.

There are now so many choices in the tech world, and so few standards. Email used to be fairly standardized. Remember the AO voice saying "You've got mail." It was once so culturally universal that it was the title of a movie. Now there are so many email clients, web hosts and types of devices to get mail on that everyone's email experience can be unique. I don't know if that is good or bad, but it is the direction most things are going. It is probably not hard to name five different ways of doing anything, from listening to a podcast, viewing a movie, placing a voice call or writing a document.

Tech companies are just giving us what we want. More choices, more things we "need," more opportunities to buy their products and services. While there can be dominant providers in the market, being dominant does not necessarily make them the best. With so many things to have and so many choices for each, how can anyone optimize their lives? What is the best photo editor? The best streaming service? The best smart phone? The best family car? The best internet

provider? These are hard questions to answer as they are. When you add "for me" to the end of each, it gets even harder. Do you spend so much time researching your choices that you never get to enjoy your things? By the time you have finished your research, is the item you chose out of date? Do you just pick what your friends are using, or what you have seen in commercials? Do you keep a suboptimal service because it is a hassle to change?

Our technology is much more powerful but also much more complex. At one time you simply had to turn on the TV power switch to watch something. Now you may also have to select a signal source, app or service, using a remote control with dozens of buttons on it. To drive a car, you unlocked the door, put the key in the ignition switch, turned it, put the transmission in gear and drove. Now you may have a remote fob to unlock it, you may just press a button on the dash to start it (assuming the fob is near), and the pedal you press may inject more fuel into an internal combustion engine or may provide more current from a battery to an electric motor. One day you may just get in and tell the car where you want to go

As our things become more and more complex, they sometimes don't do what we expect them to. Sometimes this is our fault, as we may not fully understand how to use them. My parents have had to buy a new dishwasher and a new washing machine in the last year, and though the new items are more energy efficient and do more things, they are more difficult for them to operate. They bought a Samsung dishwasher that has the controls on the top edge (rather than the face) of the door. This is confusing even to me. On their old dishwasher, you closed the door and set the controls to run it. On this new one, you set it to run and then close the door, as the controls are inaccessible with the door closed. Their old clothes washer had a big knob on the panel to control it; the new one has buttons to move LED indicators to set modes. It does more, but is more difficult to figure out how to set.

Other times, our devices are so complex that they don't operate in a stable and consistent manner. Unfortunately, with our internet-connected devices, that which works today may not work the same tomorrow, as updates change features, fix bugs and introduce new bugs. We have a lot of smart home devices in our house, including various Amazon Echo smart speakers and internet-connected light controllers of different brands and styles. I've been using the light device apps to turn on lights at certain times in the morning, and then turn them off manually with our Echo Show in the kitchen. Recently I've been having problems controlling the lights through the Echo Show reliably. My wife uses the Show as a timer for cooking. Recently she has been setting timers but the alarm never goes off. It seems like the Show got a bad update.

With all the choices and options available, tech means something different to each of us. We can tailor our devices and services to our own preferences, for experiences that are uniquely ours. If our devices don't act the way we want them to, however, it is not clear who is to blame, or who will sympathize..❏

Windows Update May Solve High CPU Microsoft

by John Lister on May, 5 2021

Microsoft has released an optional Windows 10 update that could solve a recent problem with high CPU usage. Users who haven't had this problem can probably give the update a miss.

The update, with the reference KB5001391 is optional as it's a "C release". That means it's made up of fixes and features that will roll out in the

Win(Approx. 953 words)

main update cycle later on but are available now as a preview.

The main point of interest in KB5001391 is a fix for a memory problem. Microsoft hasn't made things entirely clear but it appears it's targeted at recent reports of users suddenly seeing their CPU usage rocket to the point that their computer slows down or even becomes unresponsive. (Source: pc-gamer.com)

Race Condition Problematic

It seems to be a "race condition" problem. With Windows, that's to do with the way computer processors organize their equivalent of a to-do list into different threads. Each is a set of instructions in order of completion, with each thread corresponding to a particular application or task.

A race condition arises when two threads need to access the same piece of data and one or both threads involves changing that data. That can mean one thread running into problems because the data changes unexpectedly mid-process. In the worst case scenario it can create a loop with two threads changing the data back and forth endlessly.

Users who've experienced the CPU problem can try the update by opening Windows Update in their Windows settings, then looking for KB5001391 in the "Optional quality update" section. It may require a click on "Check for updates" to make it appear. (Source: ghacks.net)

Update Still In Test Stage

For most other users there's no real benefit installing the update. It doesn't contain any security fixes and the main addition is a "News and Interests" section in the Windows taskbar.

These optional "C" updates are effectively a way for Microsoft to test fixes and updates on real

world machines without having to deal with the headache of something going wrong on tens of millions of computers when the regular update rolls out.

What's Your Opinion?

Have you experienced the CPU problem recently? Do you ever install manual, optional updates? Should Microsoft be clearer about the potential problems with these preview updates? ❏

Vow to Maintain Your Home Network

By Kurt Jefferson, Editor, Central Kentucky Computer Society

January 2021 issue CKCS Newsletter

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Now that 2020 is finally, finally, finally over, it might be time to reflect on how well our home networks held up to the strain of constant use last year.

COVID–19 is keeping many of us at home and connected via Zoom, FaceTime, and Skype. That's putting sometimes creaky Wi-Fi Internet networks under the microscope.

And many of us have discovered our sometimes-outdated routers, modems, PCs and Macs, iPads, keyboards, mice and trackballs, and other equipment aren't faring too well under the strain. (November's CKCS newsletter reported that iPad sales in America rose by 31% as of mid-summer as plenty of folks replaced old equipment with newer technology.)

In March, Forbes reported that Internet use in America climbed by as much as 70% as more of

us were forced to work at home, students activated distance learning, and streaming (services such as Netflix and Amazon Prime) surged by at least 12% while demand for TV via cable plummeted.

Cable TV subscriber losses in 2020 could top the population of Chicago and Houston combined, headlines one article from BGR.com. And, as No-Cable.org writes, "As many Millennials enter the workforce, they simply do not see the benefit of paying over $123 a month on cable service and are colloquially referred to as 'Cord Nevers'."

So if you or family members are using your Internet network more than ever, you have plenty of company. Just as your car needs maintenance, so does your Wi-Fi network. Yet, many of us don't consider this until our home Internet stops working.

Consider the following:

- If your Wi-Fi router is more than four or five years old it might be time to replace it. A 2012 PCWorld article says heat could be the real culprit. Wi-Fi routers tend to get very hot. If your Internet connection is getting slower and slower or drops connections more often, heat might be damaging your router's internal parts. Try pointing a small fan on your router and see if your Internet performance improves.

- If your cable company provides you Internet service, consider buying and installing your modem rather than paying the cable company to use theirs. That's one way to cut your costs. The Wirecutter has tested several top models. Read their reviews to see which Wi-Fi router might fit your budget and home.

- I checked The Wirecutter before buying a new Wi-Fi router late last year. My six–year–old Apple Extreme Base Station was

failing. (Apple no longer makes Wi-Fi routers.) Internet connections were periodically dropping, web pages loading more slowly, and the connection speed was dropping. (I use a Mac app called WiFi Explorer from the Mac App Store to get an overview of how well my home Internet network is functioning. WiFi Analyzer for Windows is another good tool.)

- If your home is plagued by Internet dead zones, consider installing what's called a WiFi mesh networking kit. The Wirecutter spent more than 200 hours reviewing 24–mesh WiFi networking kits before it chose its top pick.

- Update your WiFi router's firmware.

  "Firmware" is one of those words that cause some folk's eyes to glaze over. You might as well be talking to an American audience about camels: Or what's the difference between a Dromedary camel and a Bactrian camel? But as Tom's Guide has repeated over and over, "Your router is the most important part of your home internet setup. It's also probably the most vulnerable." Why bother? Well, as Tom's Guide writes, "…Updating your router's firmware is a pain, but you've got to do it." A firmware update can protect your entire home Internet network from hackers. Just do it. Enough said.

- Internet Security 101: Wow. Broadband Search outdid itself when it published this website offering some of the best advice on keeping your home Internet safe and secure. You'll read tips such as pick better passwords and choose to use a virtual private network (especially when you're using an iPad or laptop.)

Vow to Maintain.............from page 19

- Turn on your Mac's firewall. If your firewall is off, turn it on. Visit System Preferences, click on Security & Privacy. There's a horizontal panel at the top of the window. Click on Firewall. Then, make sure there's a green dot next to Firewall: On. Macs come from the factory with this turned off. Switch it on.

- Turn on your Window's firewall. (Make sure it's not disabled.) securicy.com tells you how to "enable your Windows" firewall. Make sure you leave it on.

- Run antivirus and anti-spyware software. Learn more from PCMag and its article, "Do You Really Need to Buy an Antivirus App or a VPN Anymore?" (Obviously, the answer is YES.)

- Protect your smart speaker. (You know, speakers that react to your verbal commands.) If you've got one of the many smart speakers (Amazon, Google, Apple, and Sonos all make smart speakers) in your home, be aware they can be hacked. As Norton notes, 39–million Americans owned smart speakers in 2019. Norton's website offers ten tips to keep your smart speakers secure.

- Use a Passcode, Touch ID, or Face ID on your iPad & iPhone. It's a pain to enter a series of numbers, touch the home button or allow the camera to snap your headshot every time you use your tablet or smartphone. But consider this: An iPhone and iPad are among the two top stolen electronic devices in America. Think about it. Turn on "Find my App" on all of your Apple devices: Macs, iPhones, iPads & iPod touch. A passcode can save you plenty of grief, especially if you use your iPad or iPhone for online banking. ❑

React 7-In-1 Vehicle Emergency Multi-Tool

by George Harding, Treasurer, Tucson Computer Society

Tucson Computer Society
www.aztcs.org
actuary110 (at) yahoo.com

Here's a handy gadget! It's multipurpose and has seven uses.

1. It can be used in your car to charge any USB chargeable device. You plug it into your car's power outlet. The enclosed battery will charge if needed and any of our additional devices that you connect to it will charge as well. There is a battery charge indicator to tell you how much charge is available.
2. It can be used away from your car as a charger for any USB chargeable device
3. It is a flashlight. A button on the side of the React turns on the light. Further presses cycle through low and high options. A long press turns it off.
4. Using the side button also gives you access to a red flashing light.
5. A button on the other side of the React turns on the S.O.S alarm.
6. React includes a seat belt cutter, available for emergency use. The blade is protected so it won't slice your fingers, but it is strong enough to slice a seat belt.
7. React can also be used to break window glass in an emergency. It should not be used to break laminated, windshield, or

pane glass.

The manufacturer recommends that the tool be replaced after using either the glass breaker or the seat belt cutter.

The tool comes with a cable that can be used for charging the internal battery. The unit also comes with a User Manual.

The unit has a one-year limited warranty.

This is a very handy tool to keep in your car for use when needed.

React by LimitlessInnovations
Price $40 ❑

https://limitlessinnovations.com/collections/usb-chargers/products/react-7-in-1-vehicle-emergency-multi-tool-powered-by-chargehub

Are VPNs Illegal?

by Staff Member

VPNs are increasingly popular with individuals who travel a lot, who use the internet a great deal, or who are trying to improve their network protection and online privacy. But this technology remains controversial despite being around for years now. In this article, we examine what a VPN is and answer the question, "Are VPNs illegal?". In doing so, we will eradicate much of the gray area that has arisen from the use of this technology.

What is a VPN?

A VPN, which stands for Virtual Private Network, is a piece of software that hides your computer's IP address at home and transmits data through an encrypted tunnel. The result is that VPN users are far safer from being hacked due to the encryption techniques used, but they are also difficult to locate given that their computer's address is hidden.

The latter idea can be helpful when trying to unblock certain websites and

get around the geographical restrictions that some pages have. For example, Netflix has different libraries of content depending on what country a user is in. If that user employs a VPN connection, however, they can mask their true location and thus access whatever Netflix library they choose.

VPNs – legal or illegal?

For the most part, using a VPN is legal. However, it's important to note that using a VPN to carry out illegal activity is prohibited. What is illegal activity will depend on the country you are in. For example, looking at porn or accessing gay websites is illegal in some Middle Eastern countries yet legal in many Western countries.

While that may sound extreme to some, it's imperative to remember that if you do use a VPN simply to get around a geo-restricted site while travelling, you're still breaking the law. This is most commonly done when accessing video libraries like the aforementioned Netflix. Netflix only has the licenses available in certain countries to stream its content there. When you're accessing Netflix content in a country that has not been licensed, you're breaking the law.

So why use a VPN?

Using VPNs for other purposes can prove helpful and prudent in the quest to stay safe online. VPNs are a fantastic resource to tap when trying to up your cybersecurity. By masking your identity and encrypting your data, you're making yourself that much more difficult to hack. Online criminals will not only find it difficult to access your data, but if they do, they then can't read it as they won't have an encryption key.

Life is what happens when you're busy making other plans." -

John Lennon

Someone Threatening to Post Video, Pics?

Here's What to Do

by Dennis Faas on March, 29 2021

Infopackets Reader Franco I. writes:
" Dear Dennis,
Someone is threatening to post a video of me on Facebook. A few weeks ago I was on Omegle (a chat website) and suddenly, a girl sent me a private message. After 30 minutes or so into the conversation, things started getting hot and heavy. That's when she requested we move over to Google Hangouts to continue. Once there, we went into video chat and she was already fully unclothed. She then asked me to participate. Not long after that, the video chat ended abruptly and that's when she made threats to ruin my life, my career, and my reputation if I didn't agree to pay thousands of dollars in Facebook blackmail. As proof of her threats, she's sent me screen captures of all my friends and family on Facebook and says if I don't pay up the video will go live. What I want to know is: can I block the user on Facebook? also, in regards to the threat - do Facebook blackmailers follow through? "

My response:

I've written a few articles on this already - see:
[Blackmailed on Google Hangouts?](#)

[Being Blackmailed for Money on Facebook?](#)
[Here's What to Do](#)

In short: the person you've been dealing with isn't a beautiful woman, but an overseas group of cyber criminals located in Ivory Coast, Africa, or the Philippines that specialize in sextortion scams (sex extortion). This scam is also known as [Facebook blackmail](#), [Google Hangouts blackmail](#), online romance scam, etc.
I'll answer your questions below.

Can I block a user on Facebook?
Yes you can block a user on Facebook, but that isn't going to stop them from reaching out to your family members and friends. The reason for this is two-fold.

Firstly, the

scammers have already looked up all your family member and friends on Facebook (and other social media platforms) and copied the web links to their PC prior to engaging you.

Secondly, even if you block the user on Facebook, they have another fake Facebook account that can access your friends and family directly (using the web links I just mentioned).

Do Facebook blackmailers follow through?
Based on my experience in dealing with this scam, the answer is yes - some Facebook blackmailers do follow through.

I've already had this happen to a few clients, and eventually I was able to get their Facebook video and images blacklisted. Once blacklisted, this prevents them from being shared. This isn't always easy to do, takes time to mitigate, and depends on a number of circumstances.

That said, some blackmailers will simply move on if you block them - but there is no guarantee that this will happen. It depends on which gang of cyber criminals you're dealing with. Unfortunately, there's no way to tell if the threats are real or not until the images and videos have been shared.
Is Someone Threatening to Share Intimate Photos, Videos on Facebook?

Since the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the sextortion scams online have skyrocketed. Forbes.com reports that sextortion scammers are raking in $100,000 a month. This is big money and it's not going to go away any time soon.

The best advice I can give is: do not pay the scam-

mers any money. If you do, they know you're good for it and will never stop asking fore more. Unfortunately, even if you decide not to pay the money, the scammers won't leave you alone. These scam-

mers are relentless and vicious!

That's where I can help -

I know how to make the scammers go away. I have seven (7) years of experience with this and other scams online. If you decide to hire me, I will tell you exactly what to do, what to expect, and will mitigate your case for the best possible outcome depending on your circumstances.

I can also get your money back if you've already paid the scammers, but this depends on some circumstances. Please note that to mitigate a case, it will take anywhere from 3 days to 2 weeks (depending); if you want my help, I will need to be paid for my time.

You can also use these free online resources:
Facebook - How to Report Things
Report Blackmail, Intimate Images or Threats to Share Intimate Images
I hope that helps! ❑

"Tell me and I forget.

Teach me and I remember.

Involve me and I learn." -

Benjamin Franklin

Linux Mint 20.1

By Cal Esneault, former President of CCCC and leader of many

### February 2021 issue, CCCC Computer News

www.clickers.org
office (at) clickers.org

Linux Mint is a Linux distribution based on Ubuntu. A long-term support version, Linux Mint 20, was released in June of 2020. An updated version, Mint 20.1, was released on January 8, 2021. This version is known as a "point" release, and only software developed by Linux Mint has features different from Mint 20 (the majority of programs remain tied to the Ubuntu 20.04 LTS repository).

Point releases tend to "refresh" some of the GUI features, and I checked out the Mint 20.1 version with the Cinnamon desktop. Examples of changes that were upgraded to the newest Cinnamon 4.8 desktop and a new set of screen backgrounds.

Mint continues its practice of making an upgrade from the previous LTS as easy and automated as possible. First, it will alert the user that a new "Update Manager" app is available. When this is updated, a new entry appears in the "Edit" section that gives a "one-click" upgrade. Be sure to perform all the other regular upgrades before proceeding.
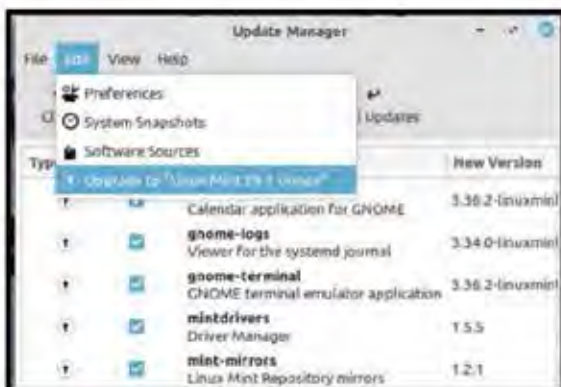
The first steps in the upgrade lead you through a series of pages (see below) where you click "continue" to progress down a list. First and foremost, you are encouraged to back up your system in case issues arise.

There are sections on "Release Notes" (issues commonly encountered or helpful configuration hints) and on "New Features" (detailed descriptions of improvements and changes). You can skip the links if you wish, but I always find it advisable to take a quick glance. If you later need to review them after install, you can find these items on the Mint website.

Before anything is changed, you must check a box stating you understand any potential risks (for this type of release, risks are minimal). The upgrade only takes a few minutes, and a message at the end indicates if it was a success. You have to reboot for the upgrade to take effect.

As usual, this interim upgrade went smoothly on my machine. Although only a few minor items were changed, it is always good to keep current. ❑

Searching for Solutions to Computer Problems

Tom Burt, Vice-President   Sun City Summerlin Computer Club

https://www/scscc/club
tomburt89134 (at) cox.net

A while back, I was diligently working on the weekly meal plan and shopping list for our happy household. I do this by copying the previous week's plan and editing it while reviewing the online versions of the local supermarket weekly ads. My meal plan Word document has two columns: one for the menus and one for the shopping list. Here's a screenshot …

Searching for.........................from page 25

MENUS:

Day		
Friday 01/22/21	PGA	Chicken breasts tikka masala w onion, coconut milk, cooked lentils, spices on rice, salad
Saturday 01/23/21	PGA	Split pea soup w ham, carrots, onion, celery, parsley, fruit
Sunday 01/24/21	NFL, PGA, David	Beef stew, onions, celery, carrots, mushrooms, lima beans, flour, wine on mashed potatoes, chips & guac, ice cream
Monday 01/25/21		Grilled tuna & cheese melts, veggie munchies
Tuesday 01/26/21	KK 8:30 AM	Leftover pea soup, fruit
Wednesday 01/27/21		Carry-in (EOT) Fish & chips?
Thursday 01/28/21		Grilled steak, tater tots, cole slaw, fruit, sauteed mushrooms

Beef: steak (3), hamburger (9), meatballs (1), chuck (2)
Chicken: breasts (5), thighs (2), legs (1), whole (0), **Turkey** (1)
Pork: chops (3), Fillets (3), ribs (0), roast (0), **Lamb**: ground (0)
Other: sausage (2), shrimp (2), pepperoni (2), ham steak (1)
Canned: salmon (6), tuna (6), spam (6)

GROCERY SHOPPING LIST:

Meat:	St	Dairy / Deli:	St
NY Steak bnls 5 lb Fri	Al	Milk?	
Bacon 24oz 5 Fri	Al	Eggs AA Lrg 18	
Beef roasts bnls 3.47 lb	Al	Yoghurt – Yoplait .49 ea	Al
Beef chuck bnls 2.99 lb	Sm		
Ham steak 2.99 lb	Sm		

Produce:	St	Canned / Bottled:	St
Bananas		Sodas?	
Grapes		Veggies & fruit	
Large Avocados		Sourkraut	
Mushrooms		Red cabbage?	
Salad mix?			
Onions?			
Tomatoes?			
Lemon(s)			
Strawberries 1.6/ lb	Sm		

Dry / Frozen / Misc.:	St	Costco:	St
Split peas?		Gas Bread Nuts Bagels	

The exact details don't matter. I use Word tables for the two columns. This document has worked fine for several years.

I was working on it last week and, suddenly, when I tried to place the Word cursor at a location within the table so that I could type in some changes, the cursor simply could not be placed anywhere inside either table. All the tools in the ribbon were clickable. I saved and closed the document and Word. When I reopened the document, the cursor worked properly for a bit until I clicked something outside the table; then once again I couldn't place it anywhere inside the table. By repeatedly closing the document and reopening it, I was able to finish the meal plan, print it, and hand it off to Mrs. Burt, so she could plan out her weekly shopping expedition. However, this was not going to be viable long term.

Later that day, I decided to search the web to see if others had experienced this problem. I used Google and entered word 365 won't accept cursor in table as my search word set. The search produced 600,000 hits! I browsed through the first page of search results and the 5th item down from the top was the following:

This article included a suggestion that if I had set explicit row heights in the table (I had), that I remove those row height settings. I tried that and "voila!", the problem with placing the cursor went away. I then reset the row heights in the tables to their former values and saved the document. After this, I had no trouble placing the cursor anywhere on either table.

So, it appears that my Meal Plan spreadsheet in some subtle way had become corrupt or triggered some latent bug in MS Word. The "fix" (really a hack) worked, so I'm happy. However, I would never have thought to try that fix because that document had worked fine for years.

The moral of this story is that, when you encounter bizarre behavior in Windows, Office, or other applications, don't beat yourself up. Once you've tried the simple, obvious things without success, it's time to fire up your favorite search engine (Google, Bing, DuckDuckGo, …) and see what suggestions others might have to offer.

The key to success is in the phrasing of your search terms. If an error message is popping up, use that error code as one of your search terms. Be as specific as you can to narrow your search results to ones likely to be related to your problem. Include the name and possibly the version of the program as a search term. If you don't get an answer with one set of search terms, try varying the terms with synonyms. Try being a bit more (or less) specific. And don't give up after reviewing the first page of results; sometimes the real gems are further down in the result list. ❏

Buying a TV? 3 things NOT to waste your money on

BY CHARLIE FRIPP, KOMANDO.COM *MAY 12, 2021*

There are a plethora of televisions to choose from when looking to buy a new set. But as you probably know, not all televisions are created equally. So, while the latest Samsung TV has the newest technology, it might not fit into your budget.

But no matter your budget or technical specifications, there are three things that you shouldn't waste your money on. We're not talking about this [$400K folding TV that hides in the floor](#) when you're not watching (which is obviously a necessity).

Rather, there are televisions on the market with "innovative" technical details or industry buzzwords that will do nothing to enhance your viewing. To get the most viewing pleasure for your money, stay away from these features.

8K resolution

The world marveled at 4K resolution when it first arrived in ultra-high definition televisions sets in the 2000s. Having roughly four times more pixels than standard high definition (HD), the clarity and crispness of the visuals seemed otherworldly.

The introduction of 8K, however, showed consumers what was possible with the latest technological breakthroughs. The highest resolution as defined by the HD standard measures 7680×4320 pixels.

It undoubtedly has the best picture quality, but there is a major drawback: lack of content. There isn't enough 8K content available to justify the purchase of an 8K television. There is currently no streaming service that supports the format, and there doesn't seem to be any plans in the works.

Even on YouTube, only a handful of 8K clips have been uploaded and most comprises of natures scenes, slow motion events or cityscapes. It's definitely gorgeous to look at, but it's not why you'd buy it. If you have the budget for an 8K TV, splurge on a high-end 4K set instead.

Refresh rates higher than 60Hz

In 2018 actor Tom Cruise famously called on film fans to turn off motion smoothing on their televisions. The setting, which has become known as the "soap opera effect," alters content to have ultrasmooth motion.

The technology was developed to combat motion blur in movies and sports on LCD monitors and screens. But it made visuals worse. And it was predominantly a problem with systems that had a refresh rate higher than 60Hz. To correct the subsequent issue, screens with 120Hz and 240Hz were made.

But why is 60Hz bad? Well, it has to do with how televisions work and the content that is made for them. This is obviously not a problem for content that is shot in 30 or 60 frames per second. But Hollywood films and traditional television shows are shot at 24 frames per second.

On a 60Hz (or 60 frames per second) television, the internal processor needs to compensate for the

"missing" frames, so it creates its own. Taking a bit of the previous frame and a bit from the next frame creates the smoothing (or the soap opera effect). Imagine watching "Game of Thrones" with a filter suited for "The Young and the Restless." Yikes.

Extended warranties

If you want to waste your money on something truly useless, fork out extra dollars for an extended warranty on your television. Retailers will often try to convince you that extending the warranty is a necessity in case it needs repairing beyond the original time frame. ❑

Lost the password, but needs PC access

Suscriber
JC-
MCathy needs to rescue some files from an old PC whose sign-in password he's lost track of.

"Hi!"I'm sending this because I have an old PC that I have forgotten the password to, and I can't seem to get in. Anything I do requires the password, and I don't have access to another device, and a factory reset is out because of photos stored on the device."Any ideas?"

Sure! I suggest you try an ancient, still-working hack that lets you gain full administrator access on a Windows PC, even if the accounts and passwords are mangled, unknown, or blocked! (And I do mean "ancient": this hack has worked in every version of Windows since Win95!)

There are two prerequisites. One is that you have physical access to the PC in question; the hack cannot be performed remotely. (That's a good thing!)

The second is that you need to have a standard, free, bootable Windows Installation or Recovery flash drive or DVD.

If you already have such an Installation or Recovery drive or disc, great! You can proceed with the hack, as discussed below.

But if not, you'll need to get one. That could be a problem without a second PC available; perhaps you could ask a friend to make a copy for you. It's free and easy!

To create official Win10 Installation media, visit Microsoft's [Download Windows 10](#) page, and follow the instructions under *Create Windows 10 installation media*. Or follow Microsoft's instructions to [Create a recovery drive](#).

Once you have the Installation or Recovery media in hand, proceed.

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Brevard Users Group Secretary's Report

By Bill Middleton

One Senior Place Meeting - Monday, April 12, 2021

1. The meeting was called to order by President, Bill Middleton at 2:00 PM.
2.   Members were urged to pay their dues and make sure their registration details were up to date.   Dues may be paid at any meeting or mailed to the BUG Club, PO Box 2456, Melbourne, FL 32901. Please make sure your current email is included with any mailed-in dues.
3. The Month's DD was on what's new with cell phones. T-Mobile's announcement that it would no longer support CDMA protocol phones after January 1, 2022 was first presented for discussion. Chuck contributed that it wasn't just T-Mobile and Sprint who sold CDMA phones, but Verizon sold many, many of this type. Members with phones more than a couple years of age are urged to check their phone's specifications usually found deep within "Settings" on most phones. Other cell phone carriers are expected to follow T-Mobile's lead in obsoleting this type of phone. The President contributed his recent cell phone obsolescence experience. A couple weeks prior to the meeting he got a new car. When he and the dealer rep were connecting his two-year-old android phone to the new car, the car demanded he get a new phone. The Bluetooth worked fine, but to connect to Subaru's mobile support system, the car demanded a newer Android system than his phone's 8.0 OS. Fortunately he had recently discovered an inexpensive way to upgrade to a current spec, mid-level phone. The Home Shopping Network, "HSN" sells a number of such phones with a full year of TracFone service for under $100. This only includes 1.5 gigs of data, but $10 or

$20 refill cards are available at many local stores. About a week after receipt of his nice, new LG Rebel, Android 10 phone, LG announced they were going to stop making cell phones. A week or two prior to the meeting, the president had seen a Bert Wolf, Travels and Traditions TV program on cell phones. Mr. Wolf discussed some recent studies done in France and Sweden

on cell phone safety. Potential personal danger from the tiny RF signals was studied in this country perhaps 20 years ago and pronounced of no significance. The new studies cited by Mr. Wolf on current cell phones seem to indicate otherwise. Mr. Wolf declared he has permanently moved his cell phone from his pocket to his briefcase and will always use speakerphone rather than hold the phone to his ear. It was hoped to show the members where to see the program on Bert Wolf.com, but it had not yet been posted with the 100+ programs available on the website.

4. Chuck fielded a few previously discussed Windows and Android questions during the Q&A.
5. The meeting was adjourned shortly after 3:00. ❑
6. Respectfully submitted by Bill Middleton, Secretary.

Lost Password.............from page 29

You'll see the details in a sec, but in outline form, the hack is this: you start your PC from the Installation or Repair medium and *not* from the PC›s hard drive. You then use the Installation or Repair medium›s [Windows Recovery Environment](#) to temporarily rename some system files on the hard drive. During the next reboot, you employ a further trick to cause Windows to use the altered

Bug Club Treasurers Report
By Loretta Mills , Treasurer

Checking Account	July 1, 2019
Beginning Balance	$ 1052.36
Ending Balance	$ 1052.36
Saving Account Balance	$ 1087 65
Combined Balances	$ 2140.00

---

files to launch an admin-level command processor — and *that* gives you the keys to the Windows kingdom.

From that admin-level command line, you can create, delete, change user accounts and passwords, change account levels (e.g., promote or demote users to and from admin status), examine and copy files and folders, etc.

The method of accessing this back door into Windows has changed little over the years. In fact, in looking for an answer to JC McCarthy's question, I just now tried the hack on two PCs running Win10 20H2, and it still works fine! ❑

I believe every human has a finite number of heartbeats. I don't intend to waste any of mine.

Neil Armstrong

**Going North for the summer
or coming back?**

Don't miss a single issue of your

Space Coast PC Journal

If your email address will be different

Please give us the correct email

For your temporary location

Reminder
We need your e-mail addresses!
We'd like to keep in touch with you,
especially if there is a last minute
change in venue for the club meeting.
**Please send e-mail addresses and changes to
Linda Glassburn glassburn@earthlink.net**

**Are you having problems with your
hardware or software?
Did you find the solution yourself?**

How about sharing that information with your
fellow club members? Sit down for a few minutes
open up that word processor and put your ideas
to paper. Aside from the value to the members,
you'll get your name in print!

**Don't worry about the details, we'll
edit it for the best appearance and
presentation.**

Calendar
of Events

Club Meeting, 2 PM   May 20

May 31, 2021 - Deadline for Journal Input

Presentations Schedule

Bring Some Friends   or Neighbors

Beginners or Advanced
Bring Your Questions
Get Technical Help
Share Your Knowledge

at Your SCPCUG

Learning Center

Open 1st, 3rd, 5th Saturdays,
12 to 3:30 p.m.
Merritt Island Library
Conference Room

Please restrict your visits to these times.

Bring your hardware or software problems,
We'll do all we can to help.

If you bring a desktop computer please bring the keyboard, mouse, and power cord

Call Ron Ingraham, 321-777-2578, for more information.

The
Space Coast PC Users Group Journal

is produced using

Adobe InDesign CS3

All SCPCUG club members are entitled to receive the electronic version of the Journal in pdf format. You'll need Adobe's widely available Acrobat Reader X.X (free) to view the eJournal.

Contact Ron Ingraham
ringram28@cfl,rr,com to get on the eJournal mailing list

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NAME _____ [ ] New [ ] Renewal

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Home Phone _____ Work Phone (Optional) _____

E-mail _____

Would you like to attend: a class for BEGINNERS?   [ ]
                  an ADVANCED DOS class?   [ ]
                  a WINDOWS class?   [ ]
                  an ADVANCED WINDOWS class?   [ ]
What other topics would you like covered in a class? _____

Do you have expertise that you would like to share? Please describe.
_____ ☐

Would you be willing to be listed in the Helpline of the *Journal*?
If so, what subject? _____ Calling hours: _____
Phone _____ E-mail _____

Would you like to help the Club in the following areas?
Resource Center Staff _____ Journal Staff _____
Computer Doctor _____ Room Setup _____ Teach Class _____
Other _____

What topics would you like to see for monthly programs?

What can the SCPCUG do to help you and others?

If you were told about the SCPCUG by a club member, write that
member's name here _____

Make check payable to: Space Coast PC Users Group
Mail to: SCPCUG , 801 Del Rio Way, #304, Merritt Island, Fl 32953

SPACE COAST PC USERS GROUP, INC.
801 Del Rio Way, #304,
Merritt Island, Fl , 32953

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Space Coast PC Users Group is an independent, not for profit, computer group open to anyone interested in computers. It is not affiliated with any business. Our purpose is to serve as an educational, scientific, and literary organization designed to enhance computer literacy.

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Initial Membership $25 . Annual Dues have Been Suspended

BENEFITS: Members get the monthly   *Journal*. In addition, <u>only</u> members can:
· copy from the Shareware library
· participate in meeting drawings
attend special seminars/workshops
talk to one of our computer 'doctors'
· use the Helplines

NEXT MEETING
May 20

Merritt Island Library Conference Room   1185 North Courtenay Parkway,

Merritt Island, FL

Guests are always welcome at the Space Coast PC Users Group meeting.